

Neartown Association Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

- Commence: 7:07 pm or 7:04 pm, depending on whose time piece you believe
- 24 in attendance

- A film crew was there, looking for info and interviews for a documentary about homeless GBLT kids in the area

- Emily from BluePrint Houston was there
- date for meeting and presentation of plan for the Neartown Crossroads TAP has been changed to April 29&30, at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
- David: Boutique Hotel JJ has been noted as a potential problem, as they have applied for variances. Such applications are a red flag that someone desires to do something that is not in the best interest of the neighborhood. In this case, among other things, they want to change parking accommodations, and the distance they will be situated away from adjacent structures.
- Neartown will watch this, and keep current with the Planning Department to maintain standards in our neighborhood(s)

- Daniel Menendez, COH Department of Public Works spoke
- six projects slated for our area:
 - -street reconstruction in south end
 - -water line replacement W. Gray — Dallas — Montrose — Waugh
 - -storm sewer projects in River Oaks area
 - -relocate community sewers in south end
 - -water line replacement in St. Thomas area
 - -storm sewer project in 4th Ward / Avondale area
- Discussion followed re this last project
- Menendez claims that calls to 311 re public works problems are investigated by his department and fixed. This drew laughs from many in the audience.

- John van Breesen, Sr. Project Manager for Metro Rail Line on Richmond spoke
- environmental impact statement to be published in 2 months, 30 days for public comment
- where tracks will be in street, placement of stations
- adding as much green space as possible, esp in Kirby area
- there will be more such green areas than in the Main St. rail line
- difficult due to 8' right-of-way between Kirby & Main
- may have to take some property in order to have room for stations
- station on either side of Shepherd
- station in center of street near Menile
- station in center of street Westheimer near St. Thomas (?)
- David will bring him back to speak next month

- Tammy Wallas, of St. Rep Ellen Cohen's office spoke
- legislative session started in January
- 7100 bills introduced so far
- not all will get through to vote
- have to go through committees

- Cohen is on Education and Appropriations committees
- West Montrose Management District bill coming up
- Cohen supports it
- waiting for a bill # to be assigned, and some other things
- governor said just last week that this time, he will not veto it
- once it's passed as an independent district, we will try to combine it with EMMD
- send e-mails of support, etc. to Cohen's office
- EMMD is taking on maintenance of the Montrose median
- Cohen is in support of next project

- Tom Chappel of Assn for Family & Community Integrity spoke
- citizens concerned about homeless in area
- want to start homeless shelter for GLBT youth, 12-17yrs
- have talked to DA, HPD, Sheriff, State Reps, Senators, civic associations, COH, etc.
- thinks it would be better for the kids to locate the shelter outside of the Loop, away from temptations of you-know-what
- don't want to wait for their own facility, but want to train existing facilities to take care of special needs of GLBT youth
- most GLBT kids leave home or are thrown out
- it's a matter of parental expectations.
- this group wants to educate parents & family
- want to do that training through the courts, CPS, etc.
- goal is to get kids back to their homes
- most kids on the street, within 1 week, will have been sexually abused. Once that happens, they are likely to just go on to sex as a means of earning a living.
- These folks stayed after the meeting and did filmed interviews of those willing to do so

- Robert Graham gave PIP report

- Julie Young told of East Montrose Home Tour and Art Walk, May 2, 10:00am-4:00pm

- Mark Johnson read Treasurer's report
- it's time to pay 2009 dues. NOW!

Respectfully submitted,

Juile A. Young